

The Man In South America

By EDITH DOANE

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It was the dinner hour at the Ocean House. Inside the spacious dining room the hum of conversation and low laughter of women's voices mingled with soft strains of music. At the open windows the light curtains swayed gently in the ocean breeze.

A burst of infectious laughter came from a gay party by one of the windows, and Robert Woodruff, seated alone at a nearby table, glanced up in amused interest. Something vaguely familiar about one of the group—a girl who sat with her back to him—roused his attention. He was consumed with a burning desire to see her face, but some one was between them.

Just then the little party rose to go. As the girl pushed back her chair she turned, and with a glad thrill he recognized her—Elizabeth! How often the picture of that slender, almost faultless figure, the appealing eyes, the odd little touch of hauteur in the expressive face, had been in his mind during the past dreary months. If only she had given him a chance to explain, now, by the force of his love, grown strong through months of hunger, he would compel her to listen. Perhaps she would ignore that foolish misunderstanding after these two long years.

She was very near now—in another moment she must pass him. He rose, and his face was very bright and eager as he stood, tall and straight, beside his chair. On she came, pausing a moment at the table next to his own. Now she was so close he could have touched her, and his heart throbbed painfully. Then, slowly, deliberately, coolly, without a glance, she passed him, her soft white draperies trailing gracefully down the long room.

Outside in the corridor little Billy Preston hurried past her, his fat, good natured face aglow.

"See Bobby Woodruff?" he panted. "Must be in there—name's on the register—not in room—must have come by late boat—I missed him—sailing!" he gasped exclaiming.

The smile on Elizabeth's lips—everybody always smiled at Bobby—faded. With a quick shock of comprehension she glanced back into the dining room. So that was Robert Woodruff, that tall, splendid fellow smiling an answer to Billy's effusive greeting; he had been so near and she had not known.

Her heart beat in great, suffocating throbs, the lights were swimming before her eyes, and in her ears rang Billy's high pitched voice.

"Here he is, Miss Worthington. Here's the prodigal!" he bubbled joyously. "Keeping to himself just because the papers are full of that old bridge he managed to build down there in South America. Can't shake his old friends like that, can he, Miss Worthington? Doesn't he look fine, though?" And Billy beamed ecstatically.

"I am so glad to see you," she said, with a tremulous little smile, trying to speak steadily. Her dark eyes were full of tender light.

But there was no answering smile on the stern face above her. "Miss Worthington is very kind," he said courteously and bowed gravely.

Her face was very white as she turned proudly aside. She had lived in the hope of his coming—and he had come—and did not care.

Later in the evening, so late that the long suffering chaperons had already begun to issue warning signals to their unheeding charges, Billy finished a waltz with Miss Worthington. His companion had been singularly silent.

"You look done up," he said anxiously. "Come onto the porch, where Woodruff and the rest of the crowd are."

"Oh, no!" she commenced in a quick, pleading voice, then stopped and walked beside him with gentle dignity. Billy drew her a chair within the friendly circle and she leaned gratefully back in her shadowy corner. The sound of violins came softly from the distance; below them was the muffled beating of the surf against the rocks; an unusual spell of silence lay upon the little group.

"Woodruff, tell us a story," said Billy suddenly.

"Yes, do"—"About South America"—"An adventure"—"No, a love story," chorused the others. The girl in the shadowy corner said nothing, but Woodruff's eyes turned to her for one brief instant before he spoke.

"Well—it isn't really a story; there isn't enough of it," he began. "There was a fellow down there. I knew him pretty well, better than any one else did, I think. He lived in South America—had been there for a long time—and when we began on the bridge he went out to the mountains with us. He was an odd sort of a chap and hadn't much to say to the rest of the boys. He used to go off by himself and smoke in the moonlight. Some way it was sitting here in the moonlight that made me think of him."

"Well, one night he told me his story. He had been in love with a girl in Brazil, we will say. To hear him rave about her you would think she was the only woman in the world. He thought she loved him—he said she did—but they were not formally engaged because, while she was wealthy, he had only his profession. One day, when they were at this stage, he received two letters, one from a syndicate of wealthy men offering him an opportunity that meant an assured future, the other from the widow of an old friend, asking for an interview, and saying that she would be at his office that afternoon. She came and told her

story. She had two little children and it seems they were pretty badly off.

"Well, this fellow was so overjoyed at his own good fortune—because now he could marry the girl—that he promised to do what he could for the poor woman. At that—she had been having a pretty hard time, you must remember—she broke down completely, fell on her knees and thanked him, and all that. Of course, the fellow was pretty well embarrassed, and tried to lift her up again, and just as they were in the midst of it the door opened and who should walk in but the girl and her aunt."

He panted. There was a little tense sound from the shadowy corner. The others waited with breathless interest. "Well, go on. What happened then?" asked Billy eagerly.

Woodruff rose and pushed back his chair sharply. "That was all," he continued slowly. "She wouldn't hear his explanation. He left without seeing her. He took it pretty hard. You see, she had filled his life so completely that when she went there wasn't much left."

The little group relaxed. "She wasn't worth it," exclaimed one girl indignantly. "Poor chap," said Billy thoughtfully, his fat face unusually solemn.

"You must admit, though, that it did look queer," said another judiciously. The strains of a two-step floated invitingly through the windows. "Come on," called a couple from the doorway. And with much laughing adjustment of partners the little group joined the dancers inside.

When they were alone, the girl in the shadowy corner leaned forward slightly. "They were right. She was not worthy of it," she said bitterly, "but perhaps she suffered too."

Woodruff stopped in his walk up and down the veranda. "Then why didn't she answer his letters—make some sign?" he asked grimly.

"Perhaps she, the girl, was too proud at first, and influenced by others, and it might have been—that afterward—she was afraid—he didn't care."

"But if she cared wouldn't she at least have spoken to him—have given him a chance—when she did see him?" he went on relentlessly.

The girl in the shadow rose and stepping forward with unconscious grace held out both hands impulsively. She was very pale, but the dark eyes were full of a sweet, tender light.

"Perhaps she did not see him," she whispered tremulously. The two-step crashed to a triumphant close, and Billy, more breathless than ever, peered short-sightedly into the soft darkness outside.

"You two missed it," he panted, mopping his rosy face energetically. "That was great music. Why didn't you try it?"

"We preferred to discuss the man in South America," laughed Robert Woodruff contentedly.

Shooting crocodiles in India. Shooting crocodiles in India is a little like shooting mud turtles. A hunter describes the sport: "We suddenly came on our first crocodile about a mile from camp, asleep on the bank, with its mouth open, not more than twenty yards from us. It started to get away, but I fired two shots as quickly as I could got them off, the first into its mouth and the second into its neck as it turned its head. That stopped it effectually, and it never got into the water. The next day we found another crocodile, and my friend got it just above the shoulder. This was not enough to stop it, but we both fired as it was getting into the water, and one bullet hit it in front of the quarters. They sometimes come up again when wounded, so we waited about twenty minutes, and then looking about I saw it lying on its back at the bottom of the stream. It looked dead enough, so we got hold of the end of the tail and pulled it ashore. We gave it two more shots, one in the neck and the other in the middle of the back, and it then still had vitality enough to bite a paddle in two, though the legs were paralyzed and it could not move."

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The eyes of the grande dame flashed with fire as she said:

"But, doctor, do you comprehend my position? Do you know who I am?"

"Perfectly, madam," answered the physician. "You are an old woman with a sour stomach."—New York Press.

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PAUL OF RUSSIA
His Assassination Was Like the End of the World.
The 25th of March, 1901, was the day on which the Emperor Paul of Russia was assassinated. Paul had received some whispers of the plot against his life and had arranged to leave St. Petersburg the following day and go to Moscow, where he fancied he might be safer. On the evening of the 24th he retired to rest at an early hour that he might thoroughly rest himself before commencing his journey. At 11 o'clock about a score of the conspirators—officers holding high rank in the army—appeared at the gate of the palace. It was closed, but the officers presented an order, signed by the emperor himself—or, rather, with a forged signature attached—and, informing the sentinel that they were called to hold a council of war with the czar, were admitted.

The emperor's aid-camp was one of the foremost of the conspirators and went in advance of the others to Paul's bedchamber, before the door of which was a Cossack soldier on guard. "The emperor sleeps," said the man. "I must rouse him. There is fire in the city," replied the treacherous aid. The Cossack, seeing others push forward, shouted out to demand the emperor and immediately fell, pierced by the swords of the conspirators. Paul attempted to bolt the door, but being unable to do so seized his sword and turned boldly on them. "What is your design?" he demanded of Count Plato Zouboff, "and what do these men want who are with you?" "We demand your abdication," replied Zouboff, who then read a formal deed, which had been previously prepared.

"What! Do you, who have been loaded with bounties by me, turn thus upon your master?" said the emperor. "You are no longer our master," replied Zouboff. "The nation has provided you a successor in the shape of your son Alexander."

Paul at this raised his sword, and the conspirators, who had not expected him to do so, much surprised, drew back, with the exception of a man named Beningsen, who urged the others forward, saying:

"If you hesitate, you are lost." Then Count Valerian Zouboff struck the first blow, and the others quickly followed his example. As Paul still struggled an officer's sword was raised around his neck, and the life was choked out of him, his last words being: "And you, too, my Constantine!"

POINTED PARAGRAPHS.
You can't satisfy some people. Don't try.
If you do a disastrous thing carelessly, it is the same thing as if you did it on purpose.
Some people's idea of being sincere is to say disagreeable things to their friends' faces.
Some houses always look as though the occupants were in the midst of a house cleaning.
If the women were called upon to revere the most man in town, how many would vote for their husbands?
Never worry about anything that you can put off until tomorrow. Many of the worries of today, if put off until tomorrow, will take care of themselves.
A man and his girl can endure a great many hardships when they are courting that they don't know are hardships until after they are married.—Atholton Globe.

A Man of His Word.
In answer to the query, How old are typesetting machines? the London Chronicle prints an extract from a copy of the Birmingham Herald of 1823: "Dr. Church is now at Birmingham preparing his new printing machine. The compositor has only to sit down at this curious mechanism as he would at a pianoforte, and as he strikes the keys the types all fall from the case into their proper places with a velocity that keeps pace with the most rapid speaker. The form having been worked off, the type moves into the setting pot, from which it is returned, reset into its original state without any diminution of material and these distributed into the case quite new. One of these machines placed at the bar of the house of commons, would always insure a correct report of the debate. Dr. Church, the inventor, is a native of Boston, in New England."

A Fantastic Duty.
A fantastic duty falls every fifth year to the lot of the mayor of St. Ives in Cornwall, England, when the bequests left by John Knill, a former collector of customs, are distributed. Accompanied by the borough mayor, he has to walk in procession, with ten maids dressed in white and ten old widows, to the monument known as Knill's steeple, round which, to the strains of a fiddle, he and his strangely assorted companions are required to step a measure. Then the bequests, which include 25 for the best knitter of fishing nets and 25 for the best curer and packer of fish, are distributed. After this the trustees adjourn to dinner.

Climb Up.
Get out of the valley of Desolation. It's only a step to the Hills of Joy, where the stars are shining and the morning breaks upon the tops of the mountains of God.—Atlanta Constitution.

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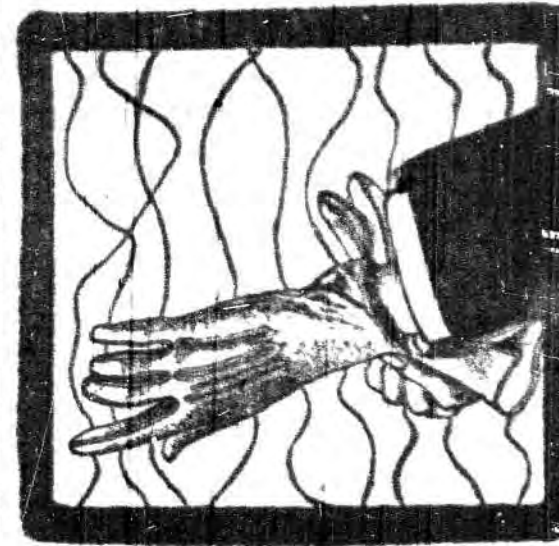
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